MORRISON HOTEL

• THE DOORS •

elektra

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AS SPRING TURNED TO SUMMER IN THE LAST YEAR OF THE 1960S, THE DOORS WERE A BAND IN SUSPENDED ANIMATION.

Singer Jim Morrison, keyboardist Ray Manzarek, guitarist Robby Krieger, and drummer John Densmore were off the road and in serious legal jeopardy after Morrison's profane meltdown during a show at Miami's Dinner Key Auditorium on March 1. Four days after that incident, county authorities issued a warrant for Morrison's arrest on charges including public exposure, triggering the cancellation of another dozen concerts across the country by nervous promoters.

The Doors were also exhausted and uncertain of their recording future after the protracted studio drama and uneven experiment of their fourth album, *The Soft Parade*, released on July 18, 1969. The strings and brass on half of the songs were a striking test of direction but not radical enough to shock or please compared to the taut, stark theater of the band's 1967 shotgun triumphs, *The Doors* and *Strange Days*, and the eclectic appeal of 1968's *Waiting For The Sun*, a #1 album. In his 1998 autobiography, *Light My Fire*, Manzarek summed up *The Soft Parade*—The Doors' first LP to peak outside the Top 5—as "perhaps too much 'quest for perfection.' "

Yet by the end of June, The Doors were back in their natural habitat—the stage—slipping down to Mexico City for a weekend of concerts. Then in July, The Doors' producer Paul Rothchild recorded the band at home in Los Angeles, at the Aquarius Theater on Sunset Boulevard, for a live album. He chose to shelve the tapes—two shows on July 21 and a quickly arranged third performance without an audience on July 22—for the time being. There was fresh momentum, however, in the set lists: formative versions of three new songs—"Maggie M'Gill," "Peace Frog," and "Blue Sunday"—and a resurrected bullet, "You Make Me Real," from The Doors' earliest club gigs in L.A.

It was a season of chaos and anxiety. But The Doors were on the road to *Morrison Hotel*.

* * * * * *

In that July of '69, before the Aquarius concerts, Morrison appeared on the cover of *Rolling Stone*, a new biweekly chronicle of the underground culture. His interview with future biographer Jerry Hopkins was Morrison's first major encounter with the press since the Miami debacle. But they did not get right to that mess or *The Soft Parade*. Instead, Morrison talked about roots—the birth and definition of rock 'n' roll.

"It's country and blues," he declared. "There are a lot of other new elements people have become aware of, like Indian music, eastern music, African music, and electronic music." But, Morrison said, "In this country, we keep returning to blues and country, because they're our two indigenous musical forms."

When Hopkins asked him about The Doors' songs—which ones he liked most—Morrison confessed that he didn't listen much to the band's records, turning back to roots. "I like singing blues," he said, "these free, long blues trips where there's no specific beginning or end. It just gets into a groove, and I can just keep making up things. And everybody's soloing. I like that kind of song, rather than just a *song*. You know, just starting on a blues and just seeing where it takes us."

On November 4, The Doors were in the L.A. studios of their label, Elektra, making the music Morrison described in that conversation—the electrified tradition and charge of "Roadhouse Blues," *Morrison Hotel*'s opening track. Over two days of honing and shaping, The Doors got a new grip on the interior freedom promised on *The Doors* in "Break On Through (To The Other Side)"—turning it loose on open highway. The white R&B guitarist Lonnie Mack, an Elektra labelmate, played bass with a firm hand on the groove; John Sebastian—late of The Lovin' Spoonful and Rothchild's friend from the Greenwich Village folk scene—was another guest, blowing harmonica with the authenticity that he picked up working with true bluesmen such as Sonny Terry and Lightnin' Hopkins.

After the hell and orchestras of 1969, The Doors were a rock 'n' roll band again, reborn at high speed. Completed in only a few weeks, *Morrison Hotel* was swiftly released in February 1970 and named after the $2.50-a-night hostel in Henry Diltz's cover photo, located near downtown L.A.'s Skid Row. (Side One's subtitle, "Hard Rock Cafe"—with no fancy accent mark—came from the workingman's bar on the back cover, close to the Morrison Hotel on East 5th Street.) "Pure Doors," Manzarek wrote of the album in his book. "Hard and fat."

"It was a conscious effort to get back to ground zero," says Bruce Botnick, The Doors' engineer since the August 1966 sessions for their debut album. "We were coming out of *The Soft Parade*, which was fairly difficult. And The Doors weren't on the road. They had to do something.

"They didn't intellectualize it," Botnick adds, dismissing the notion of *Morrison Hotel* as a back-to-basics concept. "They just wanted to be The Doors again."

Writing was a struggle. Morrison's commitment wavered with his drinking binges and ambitions beyond the group. In 1969 he privately published his first anthology of poems, *The Lords – Notes On Vision*, notably under his full name, James Douglas Morrison, as if to distinguish that work from his lyrics. That year, Morrison—a graduate of UCLA's film school—also wrote, starred in, and codirected *HWY: An American Pastoral*, an hour-long ambiguity about a hitchhiker and murder. (The movie was never released in full; excerpts surfaced in a 2009 Doors documentary, *When You're Strange*.)

Another problem: By 1969, The Doors had exhausted the original repertoire from their nightly grind on the Sunset Strip in 1966, spreading most of it across *The Doors* and *Strange Days*. "When they were on tour, they couldn't write," Botnick notes, "and they couldn't woodshed" as they had in '66 at the London Fog and Whisky a Go Go. "That happens to all bands—they lose the ability to be current within themselves."

There were lingering exceptions, and Rothchild's economy—"Pulling songs from the vault to spread the wealth," as Botnick puts it—accounted for nearly a third of *Morrison Hotel*. "Indian Summer" was a feathery pledge of devotion streaked with Krieger's plaintive-raga guitar, taped on August 19, 1966—the first number on the first day of recording for *The Doors*—but held back by Rothchild. The song was written even earlier—near the start of Morrison's stormy but sturdy relationship with Pamela Courson, a teenager from Northern California whom he met in 1965 as The Doors were forming.

In a 2010 interview, Krieger remembered Morrison's nervousness at that session. "He was sounding great but very tentative," the guitarist said, "almost afraid to let it all hang out. But I actually loved how he sang it." For *Morrison Hotel*, Botnick added a touch of reverb to the '66 "Indian Summer," deepening the wonder in Morrison's voice.

Courson was also Morrison's "Queen Of The Highway," tied to a "monster/Black dressed in leather" as he described himself in the first verse. The Doors attempted the song for *The Soft Parade* with jazz-saloon flair and a Sinatra-like lilt in Morrison's delivery. On *Morrison Hotel*, "Queen Of The Highway" was darker and edgier, his dream of escape and emotional security ("Dancing thru the midnight whirlpool/Formless/Hope it can continue a little while longer") rendered with a desperate tension.

Botnick has no memory of The Doors cutting "Waiting For The Sun," written for that album, in those '68 sessions. But the band revived it on *Morrison Hotel* with virile enthusiasm. "You Make Me Real" was the oldest and wildest nugget on the album, dating from The Doors' first steady residency at the London Fog, three doors west of the Whisky on Sunset, in early 1966. In a recording from the club that May—miraculously captured by Nettie Peña, a Morrison classmate at UCLA, and finally released in 2016 (on *London Fog 1966*)—Densmore propelled the first verse in rapid snare rolls behind Krieger's elliptical riffing. Three years later on *Morrison Hotel*, Manzarek was flying on piano like a hyper-Fats Domino; the drumming was a more controlled avalanche; and Morrison was in full, matured Delta-wolf howl.

"It's almost a kind of catharsis for the musicians to make their first album because it frees them," Rothchild told *Crawdaddy*'s Paul Williams in March 1967. "It allows them to go to other places." But, the producer went on, "That doesn't mean they stop playing the old stuff; the best of it remains in the repertoire." Left off *The Doors* and shuffled to the back of the canon, "You Make Me Real" was just waiting for daylight.

The retrospect driving *Morrison Hotel* flowered in other ways. "Maggie M'Gill" was a straight-ahead stomp that emerged in rehearsals, conjured from fragments of an otherwise disastrous October 1967 show in Ann Arbor, Michigan: a slide-guitar lick actually played by Manzarek; lyrics about a woman of the twilight that Morrison improvised that night. On *Morrison Hotel*, the singer's seesaw relationship with his job was clear in the cold reference to the "illegitimate son of a rock 'n' roll star." Morrison "hated going out," Botnick says, "and being the organ-grinder monkey."

But the part Morrison loved was in the song too. "I'm an old blues man, and I think that you understand/I've been singing the blues ever since the world began," Morrison sang at the end of "Maggie McGill." He said it again, this way, in another *Rolling Stone* interview as The Doors were making their next album, *L.A. Woman*, in 1971. "When we were playing clubs," Morrison told Ben Fong-Torres, "I'd say over half of what we did was blues, and we used our own material on records. But I think the most exciting things we did were basic blues."

There was more strong, new writing in the feisty dread of "Ship Of Fools"—Morrison's update of the environmental apocalypse in "When The Music's Over" on *Strange Days*—and the buoyant "Land Ho!," a sailor's story that came a little too close to real life when Morrison promised, "Well, if I get my hands on a dollar bill/Gonna buy a bottle and drink my fill." Writing in his 1990 memoir, *Riders On The Storm*, about the shadows and suspicion in "The Spy," Densmore suggested that the song "showed a shrewd, voyeuristic side of Jim. Someone able to make love to a camera, perhaps.

"It was becoming easier," the drummer went on, "to see the connection between our personalities and our music—Ray with his professorial organ riffs; the lone-wolf-cowboy guitar howls of Robby; and me, blasting angry, coiled licks out of dead silence."

The mood swing of "Peace Frog," with its Stax-Volt march, right into the whispered tenderness of "Blue Sunday" was in place at the Aquarius shows, although the former was only an instrumental. Then, while rooting through one of Morrison's notebooks, Rothchild (or Manzarek, depending on the account) found a poem called "Abortion Stories" that fit the urgency like a black leather glove. Here was a bloodied nightmare of current events—the riots at the 1968 Democratic National Convention; Morrison's arrest at a December '67 concert in New Haven, Connecticut—joined to a seminal childhood flashback: Morrison driving with his parents in New Mexico past an overturned truck with the passengers, dead and injured Pueblo Indians, lying on the highway.

In adulthood Morrison called that scene "the most important memory of my life," claiming that a dead Indian's soul passed into him as his family's car pulled away. The clarity of that scene in "Peace Frog"—"Indians scattered on dawn's highway, bleeding/Ghosts crowd the young child's fragile egg-shell mind"—confirmed that he always carried that vision with him.

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LP:
ONE: **HARD ROCK CAFE**

1. **ROADHOUSE BLUES** 4:05
   (Morrison/Doors)
2. **WAITING FOR THE SUN** 4:00
   (Morrison)
3. **YOU MAKE ME REAL** 2:53
   (Morrison)
4. **PEACE FROG** 2:50
   (Morrison/Krieger)
5. **BLUE SUNDAY** 2:13
   (Morrison)
6. **SHIP OF FOOLS** 3:09
   (Morrison/Krieger)

TWO: **MORRISON HOTEL**

1. **LAND HO!** 4:10
   (Morrison/Krieger)
2. **THE SPY** 4:17
   (Morrison)
3. **QUEEN OF THE HIGHWAY** 2:47
   (Morrison/Krieger)
4. **INDIAN SUMMER** 2:36
   (Morrison/Krieger)
5. **MAGGIE M'GILL** 4:24
   (Morrison/Doors)

MUSIC BY: **THE DOORS**
JIM MORRISON (VOCALS)
ROBBY KRIEGER (GUITAR)
RAY MANZAREK (PIANO & ORGAN)
JOHN DENSMORE (DRUMS)

RAY NEAPOLITAN (BASS);
LONNIE MACK PLAYS BASS ON ROADHOUSE BLUES AND MAGGIE M'GILL; G. PUGLESE PLAYS HARP ON ROADHOUSE BLUES;
PRODUCED BY: PAUL A. ROTHCHILD;
ENGINEERING: BRUCE BOTNICK;
DESIGN: GARY BURDEN
PHOTOGRAPHY: HENRY DILTZ

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CD 1:
ORIGINAL STEREO MIX REMASTERED

ONE: **HARD ROCK CAFE**

1. **ROADHOUSE BLUES** 4:05
   (Morrison/Doors)
2. **WAITING FOR THE SUN** 4:00
   (Morrison)
3. **YOU MAKE ME REAL** 2:53
   (Morrison)
4. **PEACE FROG** 2:50
   (Morrison/Krieger)
5. **BLUE SUNDAY** 2:13
   (Morrison)
6. **SHIP OF FOOLS** 3:09
   (Morrison/Krieger)

TWO: **MORRISON HOTEL**

7. **LAND HO!** 4:10
   (Morrison/Krieger)
8. **THE SPY** 4:17
   (Morrison)
9. **QUEEN OF THE HIGHWAY** 2:47
   (Morrison/Krieger)
10. **INDIAN SUMMER** 2:36
    (Morrison/Krieger)
11. **MAGGIE M'GILL** 4:24
    (Morrison/Doors)

CD 2:
MYSTERIOUS UNION

BLACK DRESSED IN LEATHER
(QUEEN OF THE HIGHWAY SESSIONS)

FIRST SESSION (11/15/68):

1. **QUEEN OF THE HIGHWAY** 1:27
   (TAKE 1, SHE WAS A PRINCESS)
   (Morrison/Krieger)
2. **QUEEN OF THE HIGHWAY** 7:21
   (VARIOUS TAKES)
   (Morrison/Krieger)
3. **QUEEN OF THE HIGHWAY** 3:20
   (TAKE 44, HE WAS A MONSTER)
   (Morrison/Krieger)

SECOND SESSION (1/16/69):

4. **QUEEN OF THE HIGHWAY** 5:02
   (TAKE 12, NO ONE COULD SAVE HER)
   (Morrison/Krieger)
5. **QUEEN OF THE HIGHWAY** 4:28
   (TAKE 14, SAVE THE BLIND TIGER)
   (Morrison/Krieger)
   With New Robby Krieger Guitar Overdub

THIRD SESSION (DATE UNKNOWN):

6. **QUEEN OF THE HIGHWAY** 4:21
   (TAKE 1, AMERICAN BOY–AMERICAN GIRL)
   (Morrison/Krieger)
7. **QUEEN OF THE HIGHWAY** 5:17
   (TAKES 5, 6 & 9, DANCING THROUGH THE MIDNIGHT WHIRLPOOL)
   (Morrison/Krieger)
8. **QUEEN OF THE HIGHWAY** 4:06
   (TAKE 14, START IT ALL OVER)
   (Morrison/Krieger)
9. **I WILL NEVER BE UNTRUE** 1:21
   (Morrison)
10. **QUEEN OF THE HIGHWAY** 1:16
    (TAKE UNKNOWN)
    (Morrison/Krieger)

MONEY BEATS SOUL
(ROADHOUSE BLUES SESSIONS)

FIRST SESSION:

11. **ROADHOUSE BLUES** 5:13
    (TAKE 14, KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE ROAD)
    (Morrison/Doors)

SECOND SESSION:

12. **MONEY (THAT'S WHAT I WANT)** 3:39
    (Janie Bradford/Berry Gordy)
13. **ROCK ME BABY** 6:04
    (B.B. King/Joe Josea)
    Harvey Brooks: Bass

THIRD SESSION:

14. **ROADHOUSE BLUES** 5:33
    (TAKES 6 & 7, YOUR HANDS UPON THE WHEEL)
    (Morrison/Doors)
15. **ROADHOUSE BLUES** 5:15
    (TAKE 8, WE'RE GOIN' TO THE ROADHOUSE)
    (Morrison/Doors)
    Harvey Brooks: Bass

FOURTH SESSION:

16. **ROADHOUSE BLUES** 5:00
    (TAKES 1 & 2, WE'RE GONNA HAVE A REAL GOOD TIME)
    (Morrison/Doors)
17. **ROADHOUSE BLUES** 4:05
    (TAKES 5, 6 & 14, LET IT ROLL, BABY, ROLL)
    (Morrison/Doors)
    Lonnie Mack: Bass • John Sebastian (AKA G. Puglese): Harmonica

DAWN'S HIGHWAY
(PEACE FROG/BLUE SUNDAY SESSIONS)

18. **PEACE FROG/BLUE SUNDAY** 5:43
    (TAKE 4)
    (Morrison/Krieger) / (Morrison)
19. **PEACE FROG** 3:31
    (TAKE 12)
    (Morrison/Krieger)
    Ray Neapolitan: Bass

Tracks on CD 2 previously unissued.

"A rock 'n' roll group needs to have an audience to react against," Rothchild said in the 1967 *Crawdaddy* interview. "In a recording studio, that audience becomes a very specific audience—it's the producer."

Born in Brooklyn in 1935, Rothchild studied classical music and conducting, turning to record production on the Boston folk scene in the early '60s. After working for the Prestige label, Rothchild became a staff producer at Jac Holzman's Elektra Records, documenting the ferment in Greenwich Village on seminal 1964 and '65 LPs by Fred Neil, Phil Ochs, and The Even Dozen Jug Band, which included John Sebastian on harmonica. Rothchild then ushered Elektra into the rock era with his discovery of The Paul Butterfield Blues Band. He had finished recording that group's second LP, the progressive-blues masterpiece, *East-West*, in July 1966, when Holzman signed The Doors. He gave them to Rothchild.

"He was well organized—he would do a lot of takes," remembers Sebastian, who also played on New York sessions for Rothchild such as Neil's 1964 duo LP with Vince Martin, *Tear Down The Walls*. "Paul read music and had that classical background. But he was used to working with bands that didn't have the experience of jazz cats who could just come with it right away." Rothchild directed a recording date in "very good shorthand," Sebastian notes, "if you could follow it."

"He was kind of a small guy . . . an elfish character," Krieger said in 2010, recalling his first impressions of Rothchild. But he had "that gift of gab, very intelligent. He could blow you away on any subject. And the fact that he had produced all that cool stuff—it just gave him an aura that we respected." The Doors "would do what he said," mostly without question because "you can't argue with the result."

Morrison Hotel was Rothchild's fifth album with The Doors, and the session reels in this 50th anniversary edition of the album—including an extended look at the genesis of "Queen Of The Highway"—are a unique window into his methods and devotion to getting the best from the band as he heard it. Rothchild may have seen his part in The Doors' story nearing an end. With the constant state of crisis around Morrison, the stress of making *The Soft Parade*, and his disappointment with the Aquarius tapes, "Paul's effort on *Morrison Hotel* was basically a last gasp," Botnick suggests, "trying to have flashes of the past . . . Paul was trying to maintain the image as long as he could."

"Roadhouse Blues" was that ideal, right up front. It was recorded for the first time soon after The Doors finished *The Soft Parade*—without Morrison. His lyrics were there and, aside from an odd key change and a shift to Sun Records-like boogie, so was the basic arrangement on *Morrison Hotel*, including Krieger's trademark riff at the end. With the singer absent, Manzarek—a Chicago native and vocalist in Rick & The Ravens before that combo evolved into The Doors in late 1965—took the vocal with hometown-blues vigor.

For *Morrison Hotel*, The Doors started over nearly from scratch, feeling their way to the rhythm as Morrison's singing varied from smoky baritone to wide-eyed wail. "Roadhouse Blues" was in part another ode to Courson. The opening lines—"Keep your eyes on the road/Your hands upon the wheel"—emerged from their car rides together, his words to her when she was in the driver's seat. But the takes came in jolts, at first, as Rothchild cut the band in midstream, issuing crisp instructions about pace and attack. You can hear him doing it again, sometimes seconds into a take, in the outtakes from "Queen Of The Highway."

"The first version, the first take" was typically "the most free and true to the song," Botnick claims. But Rothchild "kept wanting to make it more perfect. If it wasn't in the groove in the first two bars, Paul would stop it. That became a problem for the band emotionally."

"FOR *MORRISON HOTEL*, THE DOORS STARTED OVER NEARLY FROM SCRATCH, FEELING THEIR WAY TO THE RHYTHM AS MORRISON'S SINGING VARIED FROM SMOKY BARITONE TO WIDE-EYED WAIL."

The addition of Sebastian and Lonnie Mack on the second day of tracking transformed "Roadhouse Blues." The Doors never had a regular bassist. Live, Manzarek played those parts on his Fender Rhodes piano bass; on the records, Rothchild used a rotation of diamond-standard session musicians including Larry Knechtel of L.A.'s so-called Wrecking Crew; Doug Lubahn from another Elektra group, the Rothchild protegés Clear Light; and the Bob Dylan veteran Harvey Brooks. For most of *Morrison Hotel*, Rothchild chose Ray Neapolitan, who mixed studio work with a long run in trumpeter Don Ellis' big band.

Mack was passing through the Elektra studios when Rothchild pulled him into "Roadhouse Blues" on November 5; Botnick had recently engineered Mack's debut for the label, *Glad I'm In The Band*. Sebastian came at Rothchild's request; the two were collaborating that fall on the former's first solo album. "It was in the midst of that," Sebastian says, "that Paul said, 'We could use you on this tune.'

"He had a firmer hand with The Doors—the reins were tighter," Sebastian contends. "Ray was always ready to do whatever was needed. I guess Jim brought the chaos." But Sebastian could hear the song—and band—tighten up over more than a dozen takes on November 5. "That was Paul's good effect on bands. You could find yourself honing in on that thing that popped out of the recording."

As for his harp playing, Sebastian says the question-answer effect of Little Walter's fire as a sideman for Muddy Waters "was a good way of describing what I did: 'Don't play over Jim. Wait your turn.' "

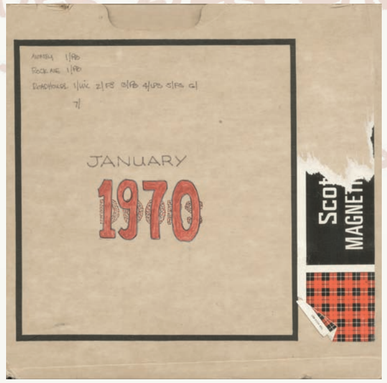
Sebastian played with The Doors again—on the road, joining the band onstage for some blues numbers at New York's Felt Forum on January 18, 1970, and at Detroit's Cobo Hall in May. After completing *Morrison Hotel*, Rothchild returned to recording The Doors live, compiling the July 1970 double album, *Absolutely Live*, from shows that winter and spring (with two tracks from the Aquarius). But he did not work with the band in the studio again. The Doors coproduced *L.A. Woman* with Botnick. Rothchild went on to produce Janis Joplin's last album, 1971's *Pearl*, and work extensively with Bonnie Raitt. He died in 1995.

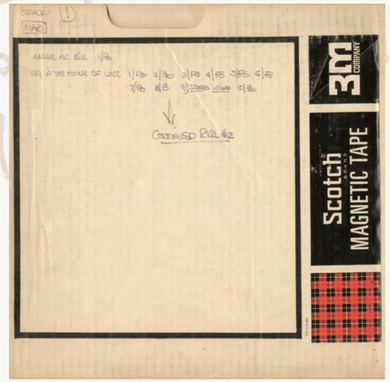
Morrison Hotel still stands as one of rock's great resurrection records, a striking fight for life by a band under attack but uncompromised. These songs also come with blunt warning: "Well, I woke up this mornin'/I got myself a beer/The future's uncertain/And the end is always near," Morrison roared in the final verse of "Roadhouse Blues." He was more right than he knew. In April 1971, Morrison took an open-ended sabbatical from The Doors, going to Paris with Courson. He died there in July; he was 27. (Manzarek, his UCLA friend and Doors cofounder, passed away in 2013 at 74.)

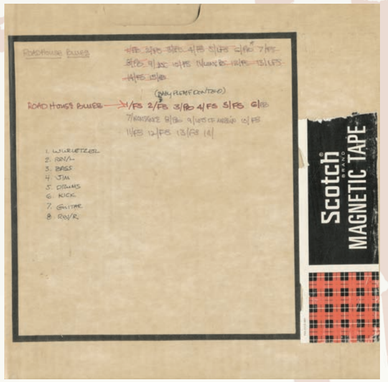
"I think we're an incredibly gifted country in pop music, incredibly rich," Morrison said in that 1969 *Rolling Stone* interview. "Think of the people who in the last ten to 20 years have come out of America. It's really going to be interesting to look back on blues and rock. It happened so fast. From a historical vantage point, it will probably look like the troubadour period in France. I'm sure it will look incredibly romantic."

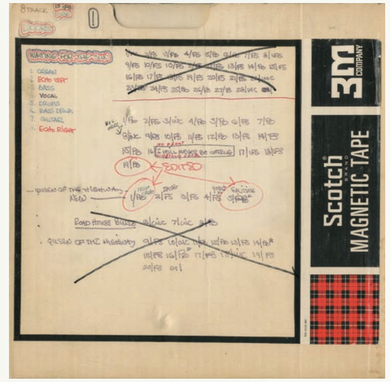
Morrison would never find out. He only had time enough for one more album.

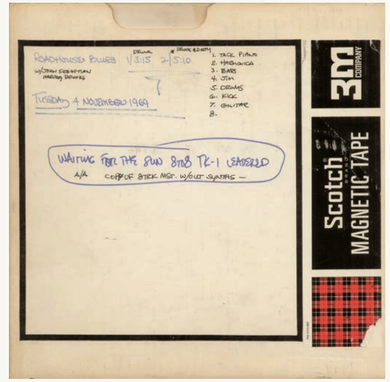
—DAVID FRICKE











THIS ALBUM IS VERY IMPORTANT IN THE HISTORY OF THE DOORS,

as it represented the beginning of their coming out of the dark of Miami into the light. For the band, it was a serious effort to return to their blues and rock 'n' roll roots. "Roadhouse Blues" was the fully fueled rocket with all engines at full power that got the band off of the launch pad.

THE MUSIC AND IN THE STUDIO

Coming off *The Soft Parade*, the band was edgy and wanted to get back to being rough around the edges, showing some grit, and getting rid of some of the frustration of not being able to be on the road playing for people.

There are three different bass players on *Morrison Hotel*. On the majority of the album is Ray Neapolitan, who'd played with legendary artists Leonard Cohen and Joe Cocker. Harvey Brooks, making his return engagement from *The Soft Parade*, played on "Queen Of The Highway." "Roadhouse Blues" featured 'The Wam of That Memphis Man,' guitar legend Lonnie Mack, bringing his roots from the many thousands of nights he'd played in bars and one-horse towns throughout the American South.

"Indian Summer" was an outtake from the first album, and it's quite interesting to hear Jim four years earlier, pure of voice, our crooner.

CD 2, "Mysterious Union," is basically comprised of two songs: "Queen Of The Highway" and "Roadhouse Blues." Included from the sessions are rough versions of "I Will Never Be Untrue," "Money (That's What I Want)," "Rock Me," "Peace Frog," and "Blue Sunday." There are many takes, different arrangements, false starts, and insightful studio conversations between the band, who were in the studio, and Paul Rothchild, who was in the control room. It's like being a fly on the wall. You'll notice that on the trio versions—piano, bass and drums—Robby is missing in action as he was taking a break, but on the last complete take, he overdubbed his rhythm guitar. Jim was having a beer and relaxing.

Right after completion of *Morrison Hotel*, the band was given a new lease on life and allowed to tour again. The majority of the live set list was from *Morrison Hotel* with favorites like "Light My Fire," "When The Music's Over," and "The End." That tour gave us *Absolutely Live* and all the resulting live albums from Hollywood, Detroit, Pittsburgh, Philadelphia, Boston, and finally New York.

TECHNICAL NOTES

This record and CD are the first time that you will hear the original stereo album mixes for *Morrison Hotel* as they were intended. After allowing the 1/4" 15ips masters to come to room temperature, as they were stored in a world-class, temperature-controlled vault, we transferred the masters, A/D at 384k/32bit, in order to resolve the original recorded bias frequency from the 2-track machine so that the tape ran at exactly the same speed as the 8-track master.

Another very important thing was that every time we came across a splice, we adjusted the playback head azimuth for the incoming portion of the mix. In 1970 we didn't have automation, so as we mixed to the stereo Ampex 440-2 tape recorder, if we missed a move, or liked a portion of another mix pass, we stopped, backed up the 8-track, put the 2-track into record, and continued mixing. During this process, the 2-track recorder wasn't up to speed, so when we cut mixes together, there were variables. Now, by using the Plangent Process, every song is on speed and in azimuth. Center is so center that you almost feel that there are three loudspeakers in front of you.

When the speed and azimuth adjustment was completed, it was obvious that the original EQ and sound of the Sunset Studio 1 vacuum tube console and echo chamber sounded great, so we made the decision to do as little EQ as possible for this master so that the music would speak—as it originally did.

Looking at the original mastering EQ sheets, it's quite obvious that because of the limitations of the 1970 lacquer mastering process, the focus in those days was getting the music on the disc so that the pressing would play on any record player. Today, we have much more latitude and can be faithful to the original mixes.

We've encoded this album with MQA, and if you have an MQA decoder, this CD can be played back at 176kHz/24bits, so your listening experience will be enhanced greatly.

The new mastering is much fatter; the band now has all the balls that we always knew were there.

—BRUCE BOTNICK Ojai, California,May 2020

"WELL, I WOKE UP THIS MORNIN', I GOT MYSELF A BEER,
THE FUTURE'S UNCERTAIN, AND THE END IS ALWAYS NEAR"

—"Roadhouse Blues"

300
COCKTAILS
Old Tap
HARD ROCK CAFE
COCKTAILS